Cancer by potato chips and french fry

3923. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a German research report has claimed that potato chips and french fry contain acrylmide acid which can cause cancer in foetus and newly born babies through mothermilk;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to conduct a research in this regard to find the truth and direct the companies manufacturing potato chips and french fry to print warning on packets of these eatables for pregnant women and lactating mothers; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) According to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) acrylmide has been found in a range of cooked and heat-processed foods. In Humans, studies of workers exposed to acrylmide through air and contact with their skin reported no evidence of cancer, though prolonged exposure to acrylmide is reported to cause a range of tumors in animals (rats and mice). World Health Organisation (WHO) documents also indicate that a clear picture of the nature and the level of risk from acrylmide does not exist.

PHCs in the country

3924. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Primary Health Centres functioning in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) the number of villages which are lacking this facility, State-wise; and

(c) the plan of Government for setting up of PHCs in such villages and the time by which all villages will be covered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) In accordance with the latest update figures available from the Rural Health Statistics in India March 2002—issued by the Department of Family Welfare, a total of 22842 Primary Health Centres were functioning in the country as on 31st March 2001. Number of Primary Health Centres (PHCs) functioning State-wise, is given at Statement-I (*See* below).